

**HOWTH
YACHT CLUB**

Junior Members 2026 Parents Open Night



Introduction

- Meet the team
- Our Goal for 2026
- What's new for 2026 and why we've changed
- The HYC Junior Pathway - Summer Courses
- Racing Options
- Chartering in HYC & Buying a boat
- The HYC Dinghy Pen
- Important Sailing Equipment
- Questions

Introduction to the HYC Junior Section

HYC was founded in 1895 and is the largest yacht club in Ireland

It is a World class sailing venue regularly hosting international, national and regional championships

HYC Junior sailors are all members of HYC

HYC sailors are capitated as members of the ISA Irish Sailing Association which is the NGB; National Governing body for Sailing in Ireland

HYC Junior sailors are 7-18 years old, and there are about **150+ sailors in the program each year.**

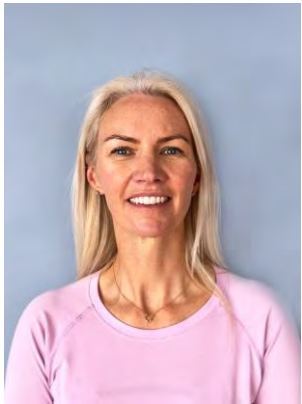
Racing-oriented sailors participate in local and regional regattas, and we have many HYC junior sailors competing internationally.

In designing HYC Junior offerings, we seek to appeal to a variety of junior sailors with varying goals and aspirations for the summer

HYC Junior section constantly evolves and this year is no different

Meet The Team – Junior Committee

Junior Organiser
Karena Knaggs



Pete Barron



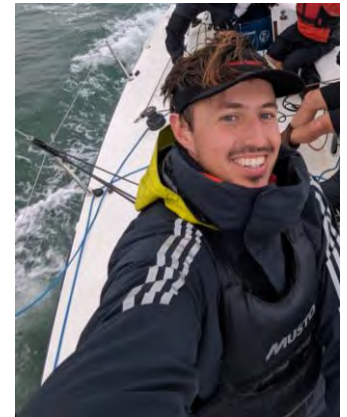
Emma McDonald



Gary Cullen



Sailing Development
Officer Matthew Cotter



Meet The Team – Safeguarding

Sarah Robertson
Designated Liaison Person
Safeguarding Level 3



Matthew Cotter
Children's Officer
Safeguarding Level 2



Volunteers – We need you!

HYC are always looking for parents to help and volunteer

Thursday evenings – Help young sailors launch their boats, trolleys going up and down etc

Coaching Sessions

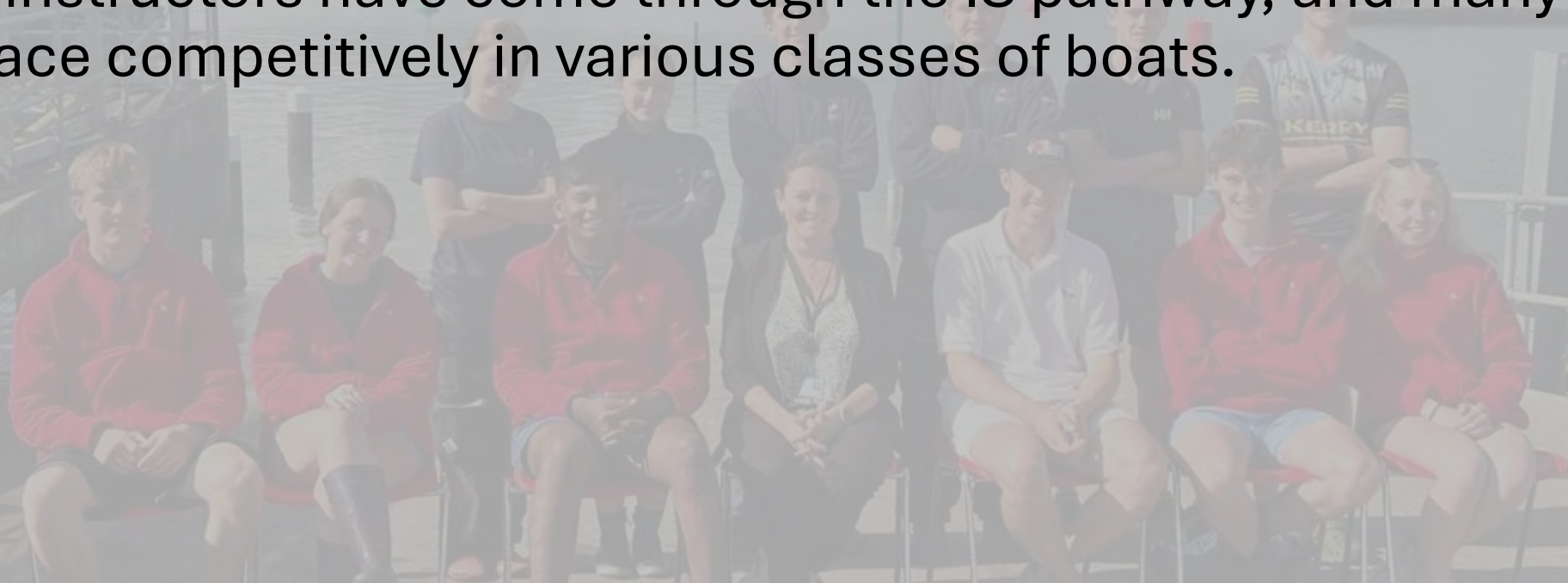
Open events

- Optimist Leinsters July 18th/19th
- HYC Dinghy Regatta – Aug 23rd



Meet the Team – Instructors

- Each Summer HYC employs over 35 Irish Sailing qualified instructors.
- All instructors have a valid 1st Aid Cert, National Powerboat License, and Safeguarding Cert.
- All our instructors have come through the IS pathway, and many of them race competitively in various classes of boats.



Meet The Team – Instructors



Aoibhín Farrelly
Senior Instructor

- Started sailing oppies age 6.
- Did a season of cruising in the Caribbean a few years ago
- Sails on Kilcullen as part of U25 team



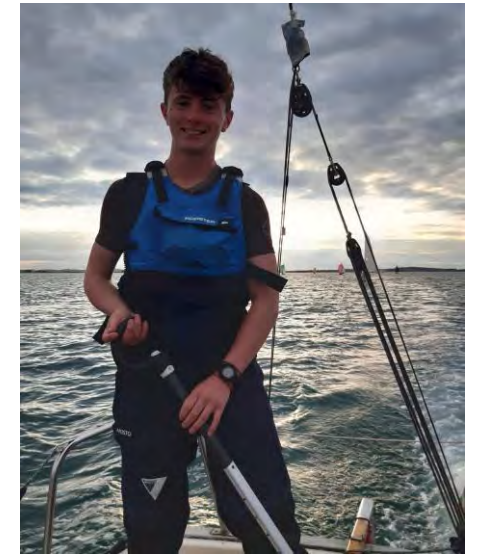
Fiachra Farrelly

- I sailed for the first time at 6 months old.
- I study engineering in trinity college.
- I sail a 49er.
- I'm a twin.
- I bought a 30ft golden shamrock for 40 cent



Aoife Lowe

- Started sailing age 7.
- I've been instructing 3 years and it's now my favourite thing to do.
- I'm happiest when I'm on or in the water and I enjoy team racing.



Cathal Langan
Keelboat Instructor

- Started sailing age 6
- Under 16 mirror world champion
- Fluent in Irish

Meet The Team – Coaches



Cillian Twomey - Opti

- Sailed Optimists for 7 years.
- Won multiple regional titles.
- Finished 1st in overall rankings



Sorcha Gannon
O'Connor - Opti

- Part of the dinghy performance race team.
- Qualified for Europeans twice.
- Went to 29er world championships in Barcelona.
- Many of my best friends I made through sailing.



Charlie Keating – ILCA

- Gold fleet ILCA 6 youth Europeans
- Irish sailing academy 2024
- 1st place u19 male Europa cup Malta



Andrew Kingston – ILCA

- Home club is RCYC
- Won Senior ILCA6 Nationals & Connachts
- Former member of the Irish Sailing Academy

Previous HYC Juniors



Eve McMahon



Ewan McMahon



Robert Dickson & Sean Waddilove



Goals For 2026

Comradery

Lifelong friendships

Lifelong sailing skills

Fun



What's new for 2026 - Optimist Clinic

Developed by HYC coaches to help develop racing skills.

The clinic has two different tiers of level to cater for different abilities.

Delivered by

C.McMahon

C.Twomey

C.Keating



What's new for 2026 – ILCA Clinic

Developed by HYC main ILCA coach, Charlie Keating

Focus on racing, leads into ILCA Leinsters in Skerries

For sailors who are actively racing ILCAs and looking to improve their advanced boat handling skills.



What's new for 2026 – Match Racing / Team Racing Clinic

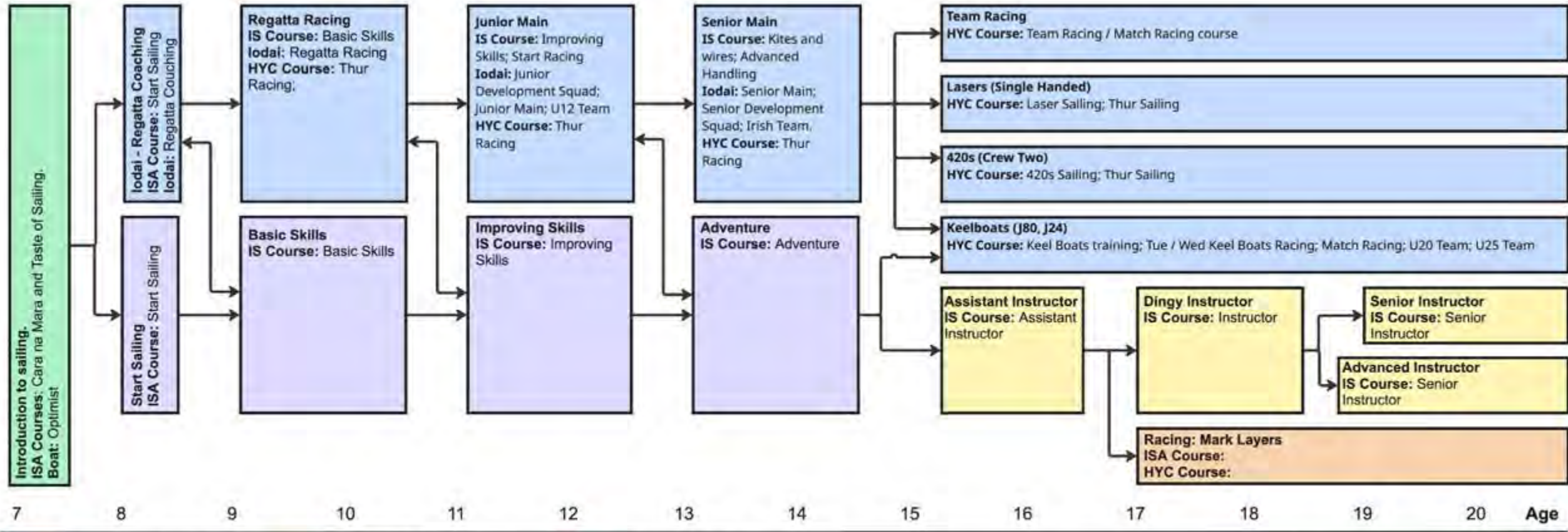
These two racing formats are a great way to keep younger sailors in the sport and have become a popular form of racing for young Irish sailors due to the strong social side of the racing

Sailors who prefer the social side but have some interest in racing.

Delivered by William Lacy



HYC Junior Pathway



- Racing:** A pathway focused on racing both locally in the club and also on the national stage
- Instructor:** A pathway on becoming an instructor.
- Introduction:** Provides kids with a taste of sailing is about
- Adventure:** A pathway focused on the social, the adventure, on becoming a competent sailor.
- Race Management:** The start of a pathway of coming competent in supporting racing in the club.

Summer Courses – Cara Na Mara

Cara Na Mara Juniors

- For our junior sailors aged 6-8.
- The course is focused all around having fun on the water and getting used to being on boats.
- Courses are ½ days and 1 weeklong.
- Takes place in Club Picos, so you do not need your own boat.
- Times: 09:30 – 12:30 and 13:30 – 16:30

Orcas

- For our junior sailors aged 9-10.
- The course is a shortened version of Start Sailing and teaches the basic techniques such as tacking & reaching.
- Courses are full days and 1 weeklong.
- Takes place in Club Picos, so you do not need your own boat.
- Times: 09:30 – 16:30

Summer Courses – Start Sailing (Level 1)

Start Sailing

- For our junior sailors aged 8+.
- The course is for those who are starting their journey in sailing. It teaches skills such as tacking, gybing, and reaching. By the end of the course sailors can sail in light winds with assistance.
- Courses are full days and 2 or 3 weeks long.
- You need your own boat for this course, we recommend an Optimist. The club has a fleet of Optimists that are available to charter for the duration of the course.
- Times: 09:30 – 16:30
- After completing Start Sailing we recommend you join the harbour optimist group.

Summer Courses – Basic Skills (Level 2)

Basic Skills

- For our junior sailors who have completed Start Sailing.
- By the end of the Basic Skills course sailors will be capable of rigging, launching, sailing and recovering their boat in light winds without assistance. This year we are also introducing racing skills to the syllabus to help prepare sailors for competing in racing.
- Courses are full days and 2 or 3 weeks long.
- You need your own boat for this course, we recommend an Optimist. We would encourage sailors who are doing Basic Skills to try and have their own boats. The club has a fleet of Optimists that are available to charter for the duration of the course.
- After completing Basic Skills it is important to continue sailing, sailors will be able to participate in Thursday Night Club racing and can join the HYC Balscadden Optimist group.
- Times: 09:30 – 16:30

Summer Courses – Improving Skills (Level 3)

Improving Skills

- The objective of this course is to develop the skills and knowledge sailors need in order to set up and sail the boat more effectively and in moderate conditions. Skills such as roll tacks, backward sailing and rudderless sailing will be taught. This year we are also introducing racing skills to the syllabus to help prepare sailors for competing in regattas.
- Courses are full days and 2 or 3 weeks long.
- You need your own boat for this course. We would strongly advise sailors who are doing Improving Skills to have their own boats.
- After completing Improving Skills it is important to continue sailing, sailors will be able to participate in Thursday Night Club racing and can join the HYC Balscadden Optimist group.
- Times: 09:30 – 16:30

Summer Courses – Kites & Wires (Level 4)

Kites & Wires

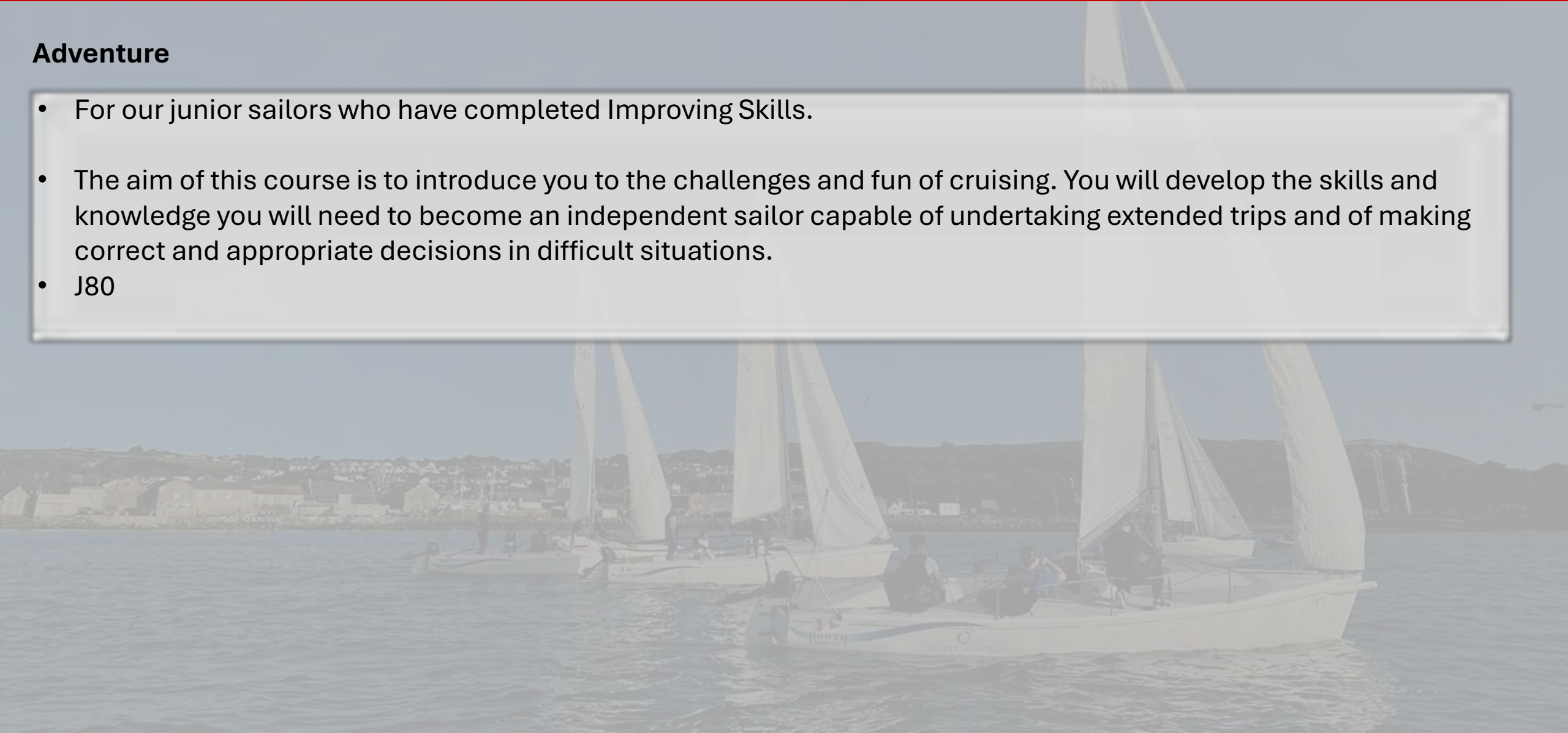
- For our junior sailors who have completed Improving Skills.
- The aim of this course is to introduce sailors to the thrills and spills of sailing with a spinnaker and a trapeze. Sailors will use symmetric and asymmetric spinnakers.
- Courses are full days and 3 weeks long to maximise the time to practice the skills learnt.
- You don't need your own boat for the course, the boats used will be a mix of RS Fevas and Club 420s.
- After completing the Kites & Wires course, sailors will be able to charter the club 420s for club racing*.
- Times: 09:30 – 16:30



Summer Courses – Adventure (Level 4)

Adventure

- For our junior sailors who have completed Improving Skills.
- The aim of this course is to introduce you to the challenges and fun of cruising. You will develop the skills and knowledge you will need to become an independent sailor capable of undertaking extended trips and of making correct and appropriate decisions in difficult situations.
- J80



Summer Courses – The First Day

What do you need?

- Make sure your junior has their membership card. This allows access to the Club and changing rooms.
- Changing rooms:
 - Lockers are available but you need to provide your own lock
 - Do not leave valuables
 - Do not bring cash, use members card to pay for anything in Club
 - Bring water and a snack, change of clothes and towels etc.
- Members cards should be topped up via the APP or till systems prior to attendance.
- A junior menu is available to pre-order each day from the kitchen, or juniors are welcome to bring their own (full day courses).
- Head to the junior room for the first morning briefing where you will be met by the team.
- Please notify the office if not attending, arriving late or going early. This allows the team to best plan the daily schedule.
- Allergies and medical conditions should be notified to the team via the booking form, or email should anything change since booking
- Be on time for collections.

Weather

- Irish Summers are unpredictable. Sometimes Costa Del Howth doesn't deliver... (Wind strength + direction)
- On land activities can include games or important theory learning meteorology, racing skills or practicing skills using land drills.
- Having longer length courses helps with ensuring that weather becomes less of an issue



Racing Content in courses?

We're adding in a HYC section to each level to include racing skills.

- Increases the skill level of HYC sailors.
- More confidence to go and do club regattas and travel to events.
- More likely to stay involved in the sport in the future.



Thursday Night Racing – Club Racing

Dates: May – August

Times: 18:00 – 20:30

Goal Target: 50 Juniors!!

Free for all sailors doing Summer courses

There will be 3 instructors every week on the water to help out.

Opportunity to practice skills learnt on courses and try out racing.

Another opportunity to hang out with your friends and enjoy sailing.



Interclub Regattas

HYC Dinghy Regatta

Brassed Off Cup

Other Club Regattas

- SDC
- Malahide
- Clontarf



Regional Racing

Race in different venues.

Make new friends

Gain more experience

HYC offers the following support:
Travelling RIB + Coach



Special Events & Key Dates

Easter Coaching

- March 30th – April 3rd (Optimist Coaching)
- April 7th – 10th (General Coaching)

Summer Courses

- June 8th – August 21st
- Note* There will be no junior courses on Bank Holidays.

Local Events

- HYC Dinghy Regatta – 23rd August
- MYC Dinghy Regatta – Date TBC
- SDC Dinghy Regatta – Date TBC

Class Events

- Optimist Events – [Class Website](#)
- ILCA Events – [Class Website](#)
- 420 Events – [Class Website](#)
- Topper Events – [Class Website](#)

The Brassed Off Cup

Date: Good Friday April 3rd

[Enter Here](#)

Important Times

- Registration: 09:15 – 09:45
- Briefing: 10:00
- First Gun: 11:00

3 Races Scheduled

Easter Eggs and Regatta fleet!



Optimist Leinesters – HYC Event

Date : July 18th/19th

An opportunity to easily do a regional

Recommended Fleets

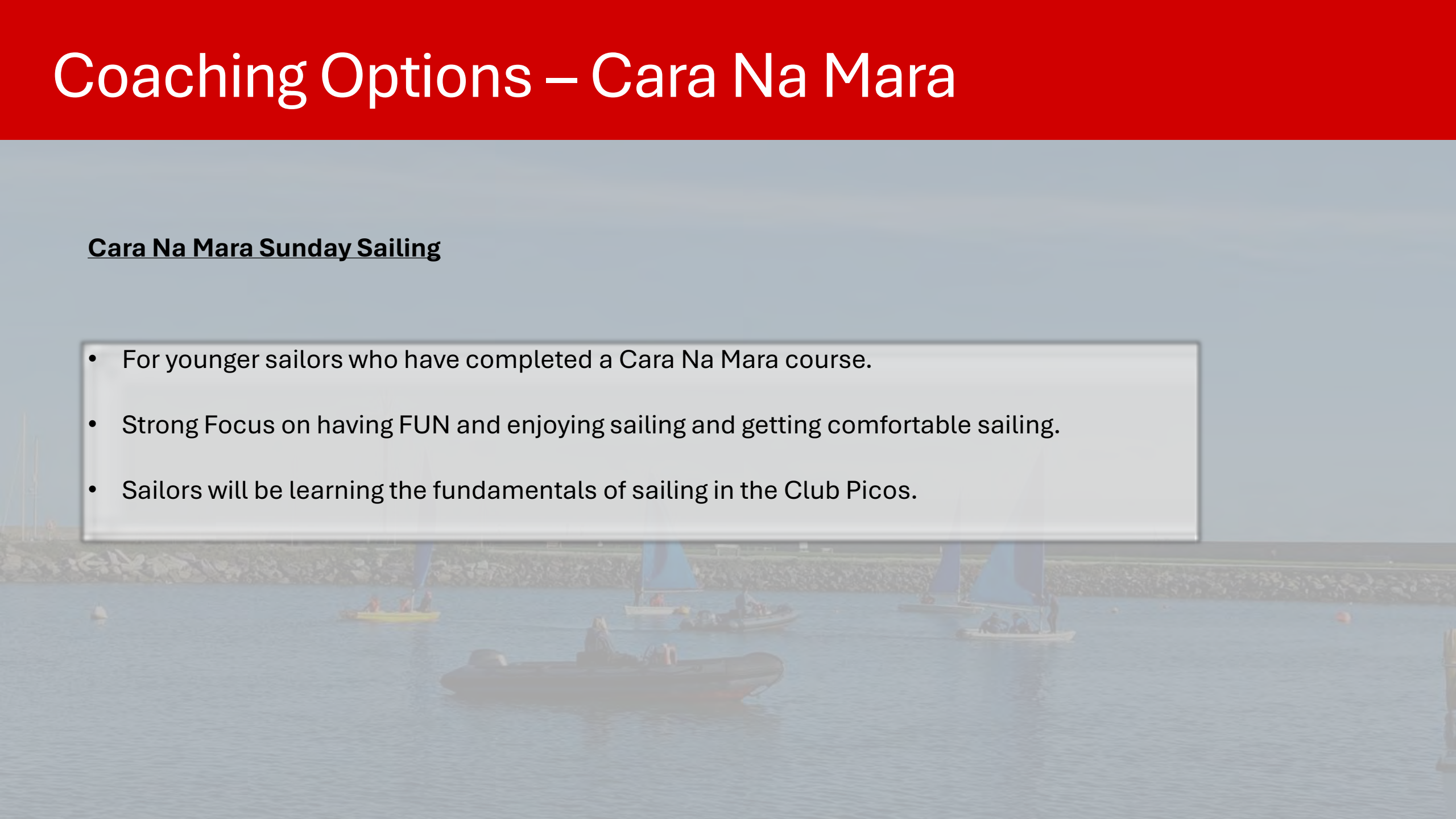
- Regatta Coaching
- Regatta Racing



Coaching Options – Cara Na Mara

Cara Na Mara Sunday Sailing

- For younger sailors who have completed a Cara Na Mara course.
- Strong Focus on having FUN and enjoying sailing and getting comfortable sailing.
- Sailors will be learning the fundamentals of sailing in the Club Picos.



Coaching Options – Optimists

Regatta Racing

- For younger sailors who have completed Start Sailing.
- Strong Focus on having FUN and enjoying optimist sailing.
- Sailors will be learning the fundamentals of optimist sailing
- Sailors are encouraged to go to club racing, local events and regatta fleet events

Junior Main

- For sailors who have completed Basic Skills and up.
- More focus on racing, starts, rules and basic tactics will be covered.
- Sailors should be competing in the junior main fleet at optimist regattas.
- Sailors can progress to the Senior Main group once they move into the Senior Main Fleet on the optimist circuit.

Senior Main

- For sailors who have been promoted from the Balscadden group / race in the main fleet on the Optimist circuit.
- Fully focused on improving racing skills. More advanced tactics and boat tuning will be taught.
- Sailors should be competing in as many events as possible in senior main fleet

Coaching Options – ILCA

ILCA Coaching

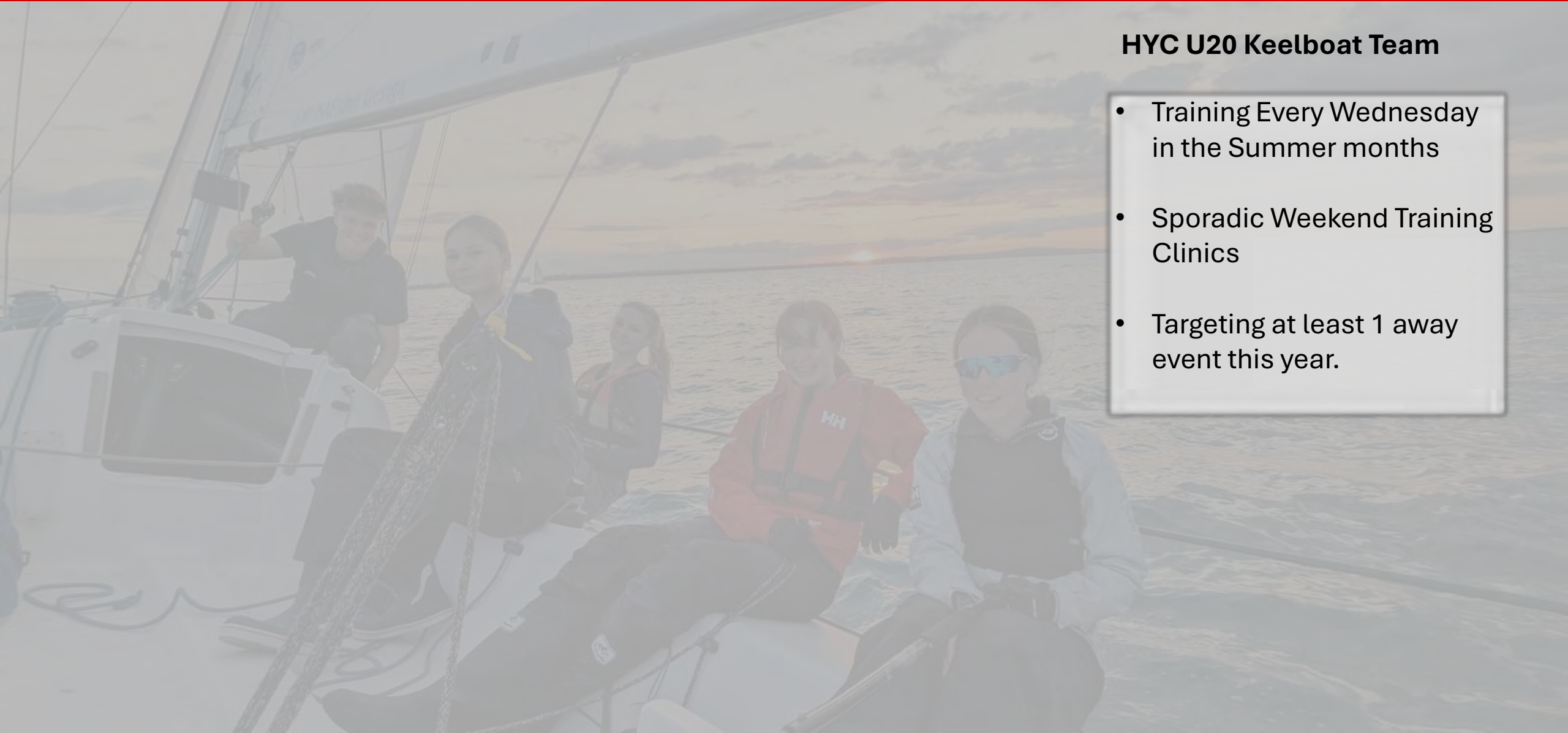
- ILCA coaching is for the Club juniors who are looking to improve their boat handling and racing skills.
- You will need your own boat for these sessions.
- Talk about development of programme and head coach Charlie K....

Coaching Options – 420

420 Coaching

- For sailors who have completed Kites & Wires or are looking to sail double-handers.
- The objective of the 420 coaching is to give an opportunity for junior sailors a chance to utilise their trapezing and spinnaker skills.
- Coaching starts in Easter.
- New club 420s

For the 15+ - HYC U20 Keelboat Team



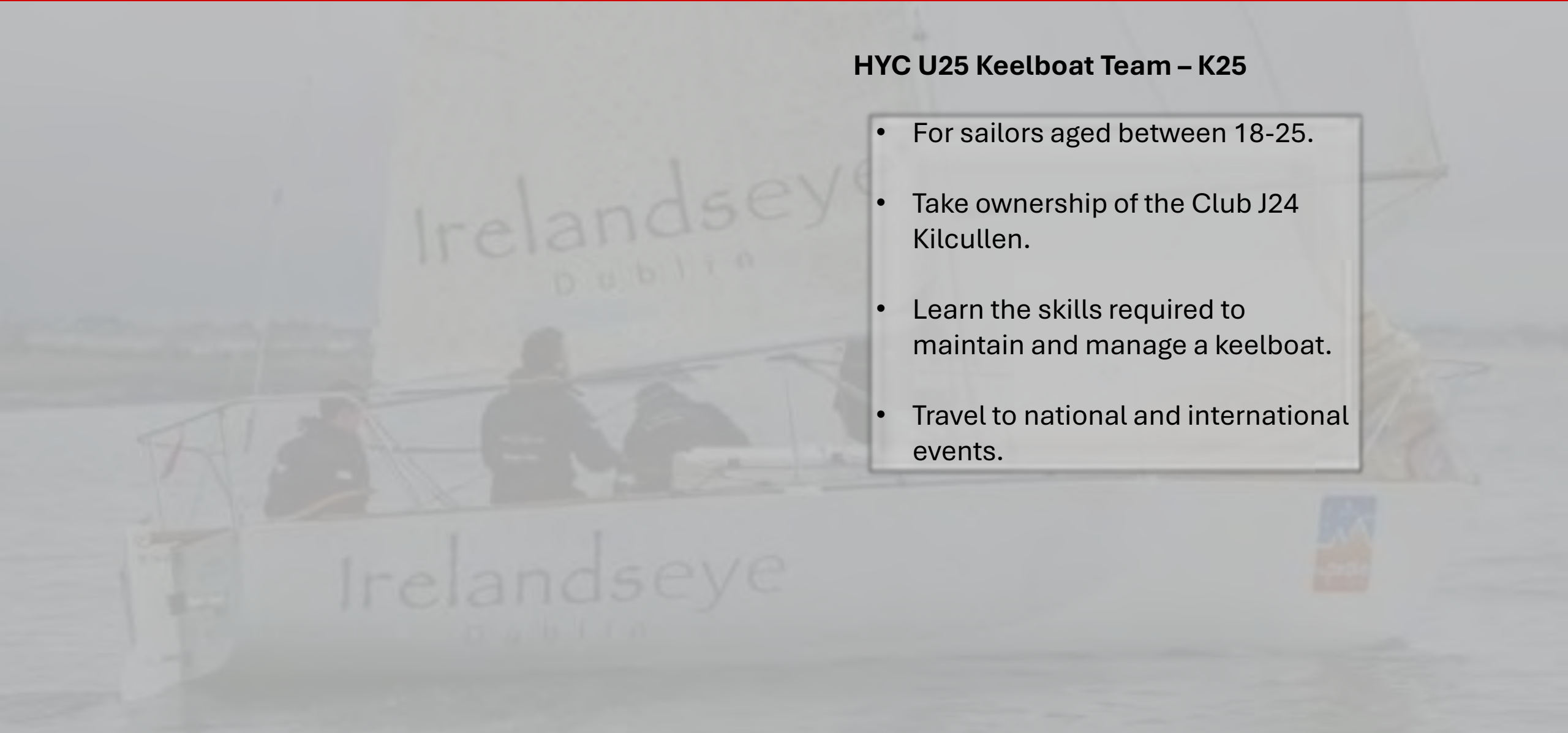
HYC U20 Keelboat Team

- Training Every Wednesday in the Summer months
- Sporadic Weekend Training Clinics
- Targeting at least 1 away event this year.

For the 15+ - HYC U25 Keelboat Team

HYC U25 Keelboat Team – K25

- For sailors aged between 18-25.
- Take ownership of the Club J24 Kilcullen.
- Learn the skills required to maintain and manage a keelboat.
- Travel to national and international events.



The HYC Dinghy Park

- Dinghy parking is available from April – October as a Summer Rate.
- Register your boat on **Park-Turtle**.
- Contact the Marina Office before bringing your dinghy to HYC.
- The Marina Team will assign you a space and give you a sticker for your boat & launching trailer.



Buying a boat

- Buying an optimist may seem like a big investment. However, with proper care and research, you can buy a boat that will provide your children with many fun summers and retain much of its value to be passed on to another lucky sailor
- You can buy a used opti or a new opti depending on your price level and intended use of the boat



Buying a boat

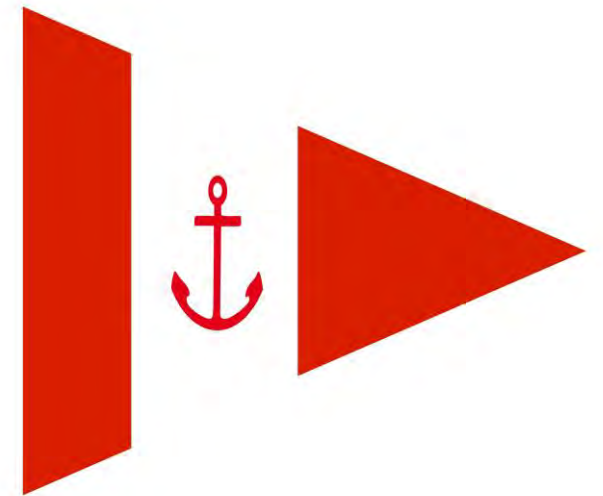
Done deal



Iodai Buy & Sell



Sailing Club Buy & Sell Pages



Buying a boat

How do I transport it?

Roof racks – just don't go under any low bridges

Ask around for a lend of a road trailer.

Ask if another parent will tow it for you.



Chartering vs Buying

Chartering

- Charters are booked with the sailing team in advance. They are a low-cost option for sailors to trial sailing before committing to buy a boat.
- Priority is given to sailors in lower levels.
- No Storage Fees
- Only available for your course.
- Easy to have repaired -> You pay for the repairs.
- Might mean you won't be able to take part in sailing outside of the course.

Chartering vs Buying

Buying – Strongly Recommend for Basic Skills and above

- Price can range quite a lot (€750 - €5,000) depending on how new it is.
- Generally, 2nd hand optimists usually hold their value if looked after.
- Allows you to join in additional sailing activities in the club and participate in racing outside of HYC.
- You can upgrade the boat as you progress.
- Give an opportunity to learn valuable repair skills.

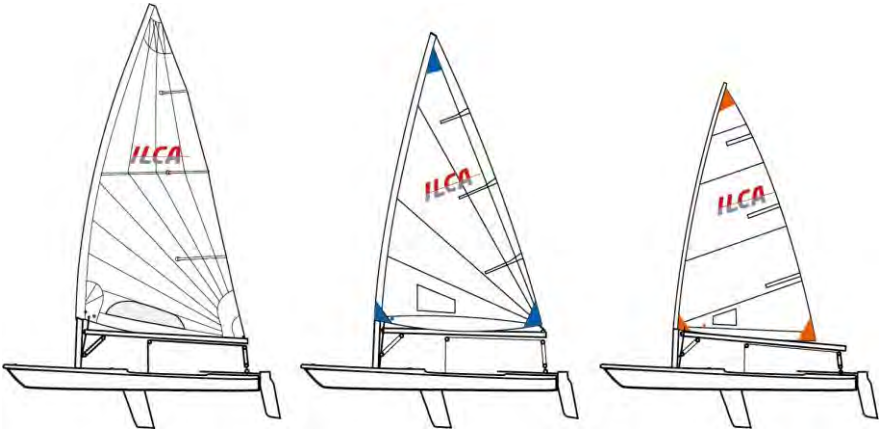
The Optimist Checklist

- 3 Airbags
- 1 Paddle with bungee
- 1-2 Bailers with bungee
- Clip on water bottle
- Daggerboard
- Rudder
- Unknotted floating painter
- Tell tales
- Mast clamp
- Mast, boom, sprit pole and sail
- Sail ties + 2 toggles
- Burgee
- Functional launching trolley
- Painter



Other boats after the Opti? – Single Handers

ILCA



Pros :

- Multiple sail sizes
- Strong National Fleet so lots of competitions
- Easy to find second hand boats + Easy to sell on.
- Can be relatively affordable.

Cons:

- Singlehanded

Topper



Pros:

- Multiple sail sizes
- Strong National Fleet so lots of competitions
- Easy to find second hand boats + Easy to sell on.
- The hull is plastic so it's very durable

Cons:

- It wouldn't have the same performance of an ILCA

Other boats after the Opti? – Double Hander

RS Feva



Pros:

- Plastic hull – very durable
- Good boat to learn the asymmetric spinnaker
- Very manageable sail area for learning double hander sailing.

Cons:

- Limited to very basic Tuning once sailors advance in skill.

420



Pros:

- Fast, Fun boat
- Chance to learn trapezing
- Can learn advanced rig tuning + sail trim

Cons:

- Requires more maintenance than the Feva.

29er



Pros:

- Very high-performance skiff
- Pathway boat to the Olympic 49er class
- Competitive fleet in Ireland with class coaching

Cons:

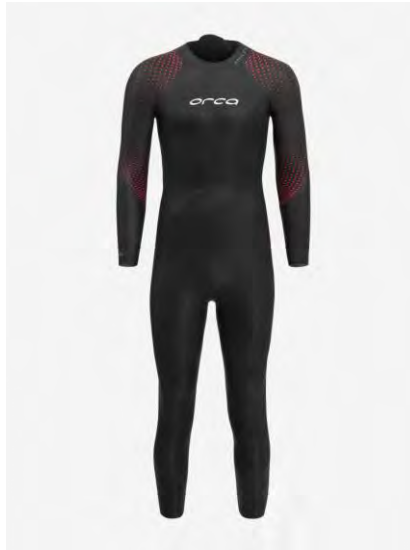
- Difficult to sail
- More Expensive

What clothing equipment do I need?

Buoyancy Aid



Wetsuit



Booties



Cag



Suncream



Water Bottle



Top Tip

Label Everything

Optional Extras

Cap / Visor



Gloves



Dry Bag



Questions



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